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CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

# WASH DISHES RIGHT



FES  
AID



SANITATION SERIES  
NUMBER 4

AN AID  
TO EXTENSION  
AND VILLAGE  
WORKERS  
IN MANY  
COUNTRIES

Federal Extension Service, United States Department of Agriculture, in cooperation  
with the Agency for International Development, U. S. Department of State

This is for  
YOU

The Home Economics Extension Worker  
or  
Village Worker

The information in this booklet is based on experiences of extension workers and health workers in many countries. You'll find ideas to help you teach families how to wash dishes.

Use this material in any way best suited to your needs.

BY KATHRYNE SHEEHAN HUGHES

Appreciation is expressed for assistance from: health, sanitation, home economics and information personnel of the Agency for International Development; specialists in the Federal Extension Service, and staff members of other agencies.

Cover Picture.--In Brazil two 4-S Club members demonstrate how to wash dishes correctly.

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# WASH DISHES RIGHT

## WHY WE WASH DISHES

Clean dishes help protect your health. Dirty dishes may carry disease germs.

Food tastes better from dishes that are not greasy and do not have stale food sticking to them.

You enjoy your food more from dishes that are clean and dry.

## WHAT YOU NEED

Two pans on a table with room to stack dishes on each side. One is for washing the other for rinsing.

Plenty of hot water.

A pan or a rack for draining dishes. The rack may be made of wood or other local material. Prevent mildew on a wooden rack by thorough drying or using available disinfectant.

Soap or detergents.

A brush, dish mop, or cloth to wash with. In some countries women use local material such as plant fibers.

Tongs, chopsticks or wooden spoons to lift dishes out of hot rinse water. These could be homemade. Even a good, strong, clean stick will do the job.

You will need clean dish towels if you cannot air dry dishes, pots, pans and other cooking utensils.

## STEPS IN WASHING DISHES

### 1. Wash Your Hands

They should always be clean when handling dishes--washing, drying or putting away.



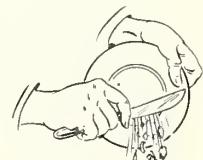
### 2. Get the Dishes Ready

Remove food from serving dishes, pots and pans soon after using them. Put away usable leftover food in covered containers. Dirty dishes sitting around attract flies and other household pests.

Scrape food scraps and grease into leaves or paper. Put into garbage container.

When you scrape dishes first, your dishwater will not get dirty so quickly.

If you have enough water, soak cooking pans as you empty them. This makes them easier to wash. Hot water is best for soaking sticky and greasy pans--cold water for milk, eggs, and flour.



When you cannot wash dishes immediately, soak them.

### 3. Wash the Dishes

Arrange equipment for washing, rinsing, and draining. Fill one pan with hot water for washing. Use soap or detergent in this wash water. The water should be as hot as your hands can bear. Hot water removes grease and gets dishes cleaner.

Sometimes fuel is not available for heating water, or is expensive. In some countries water for washing dishes is heated in the sun or cold water is used. But cold water does not get dishes clean. Neither warm nor cold water is as safe as hot water.

First, wash the dishes you eat and serve from. Then wash cooking pans and utensils.



Don't let the soapy wash water get too dirty. You may need to change it if you have many dishes.

Whether you use hot, warm, or cold water for washing, use boiling hot water for rinsing.

#### 4. Rinse

Put the washed dishes into the rinse pan.

If you do not have two pans, empty the wash water after all the dishes are washed and use the same pan for rinsing.



Pour boiling hot water over the dishes to rinse them. Water for rinsing should be boiled for 10 minutes before you pour it over your dishes. Boiling water helps prevent disease germs.

If water is scarce, the rinse water may be reused for washing.

Rinse water should not contain soap and should be clear and clean.

Rinse cooking pans after dishes.

#### 5. Dry the Dishes

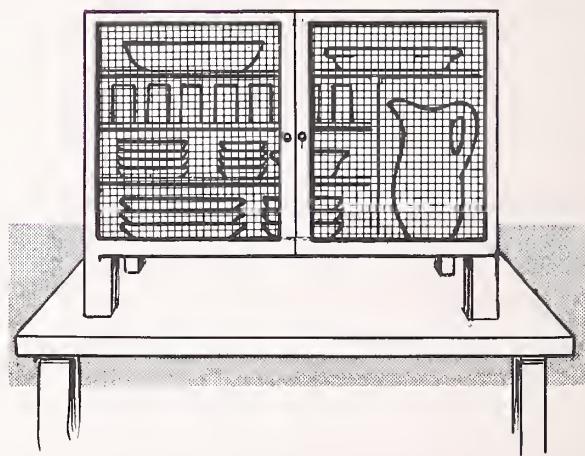
Lift dishes out of the hot rinse water with tongs, chopsticks, or a clean stick.

Drain the dishes in a rack or a shallow pan.

Let the dishes dry in the air. Air drying is the safest and easiest way if they are protected from dust, flies, insects, and animals.

If you use towels to dry dishes, be sure the towels are clean.

#### 6. Storing Dishes



Store the clean dishes and cooking utensils in a closed cupboard that has ventilation.

If you have to store dishes, pots, and pans on open shelves or on a table, cover them with a clean cloth, or turn them upside down.

Fingers carry many germs. Keep them out of cups and glasses. Always carry clean glasses by the base and cups by the handle. Carry knives, forks, and spoons by the handle.

#### 7. Clean up Afterward

Scrub the table top or eating surface.

Empty the dishwater into a container if you do not have a sink. You can use it for watering your garden.

Do not throw dishwater into the yard. Pools of water attract mosquitoes.

Rinse the dish pans with hot water and dry. Put them away in a clean cupboard or hang them on the wall.

If you have a sink, clean it with scouring materials.

## CARE OF DISH TOWELS AND CLOTHS

Wash dish towels and cloths regularly.

If possible, wash them once a day in hot soapy water and rinse in hot clear water.

At least once a week, wash them in a home-made or commercial bleach to:

- kill germs
- remove spots
- keep clean
- make white

If you do not have a chlorine bleach or disinfectant, boil towels once a week in soap and water.

Dry in fresh air and sunshine. Sunshine will help to bleach towels. Store in a clean place.

## SCOURING

Burned-on food, smoke, rust and other stains need special cleaning. You could scour with:

sand and pebbles  
wood ashes  
limes and lemons  
salt  
vinegar  
soda  
gourds--the spongy insides of some dried gourds are good for scouring.  
coconut husks

Commercial scouring powders are good if available.

## SPECIAL CLEANING PROBLEMS

### Glass

For washing bottles and jars with small openings use a long brush, a rag wrapped around a stick, or use sand and pebbles. Invert to dry.

### Copper and Brass Utensils

Food containers made of copper and brass should be bright and shining. Blue and green copper salts are poisons. Copper and brass cooking dishes should have a tin lining.

To clean badly tarnished copper and brass, use a fine scouring material such as wood ashes, or a commercial scouring powder. A cloth dipped in hot lemon juice or hot vinegar, then in salt, is also good for scouring.

Wash in soapy water. Rinse in hot water and dry.

### Iron and Tin

Remove stubborn spots by scouring.

Wash with soap and water. Rinse with very hot water. Wipe dry while hot to avoid rusting.

### Wood

To clean wooden bowls, spoons, chop sticks, etc., wash with clear hot water.

Do not use soap. Soap is hard to rinse off wood.

When too much soap is left on cooking and eating utensils, it mixes with food. If you eat soap, it can make you sick.

Rinse with boiling hot water. If possible, set the utensils in the sun to dry. Dry well to avoid mildew.

## Baby's Dishes

To help keep disease germs away from baby give his dishes special care. Wash your hands before handling his dishes.

Rinse soiled dishes, bottles and nipples soon after using.

Wash with hot soapy water. Use a brush, if possible, to clean the inside of the bottles. If you do not have a brush, use a little sand or a few pebbles. Then fill the bottle half full of water. Shake it well. Remove the water, pebbles and sand. Rinse

the bottles with more water to get out all the sand and pebbles.

Be sure to wash the insides of nipples.

Place the bottles, nipples, spoon and dishes in a pan. Cover with water. Boil for 10 minutes. Drain.

Air dry. Avoid touching the rims or insides.

Keep them separate from the family dishes.



## Dishes for the Sick

Wash your hands before and after handling dishes for the sick, to avoid spreading disease germs.

Burn or bury any food the sick person has been served but does not eat.

Wash the dishes with soapy water.

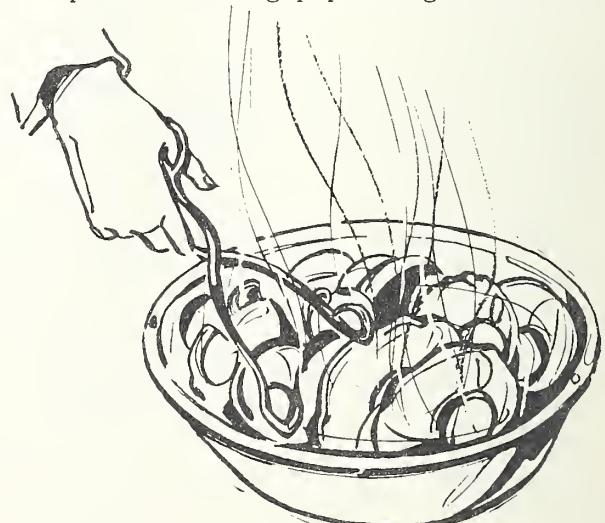
Place them in a pan covered with clean water.

Boil for 10 minutes. Drain. Air dry.

Store separately from the dishes the rest of the family uses.

When possible use some kind of material that can be burned or buried for serving

food to a sick person. A large clean leaf or piece of strong paper might be used.



# DEMONSTRATIONS

- using boiling hot water for rinsing.

- air drying of dishes.

How to wash dishes.

If you follow instructions given in this bulletin, you can give a good demonstration.

Emphasize:

- using soapy water for washing.

How to make soap.

How to make scouring materials.

How to make a sink.

How to make a dish rack.

How to make storage to keep dishes clean.

## Suggestions to Help You Give a Good Demonstration

Prepare yourself carefully. Know more about the subject than you plan to teach.

Outline your demonstration step by step and write down exactly what you will say at each step.

Practice your demonstration until you can do every step without hesitation.

Use only equipment and materials available to village families.

Arrive at your meeting place ahead of the women and arrange all materials for your demonstration neatly and in the order you will use them.

Plan for your audience to be seated so that everyone can see and hear easily.

Use visual aids in your demonstration if they will help to make your presentation clearer.

Ask one of the women to assist you. This helps develop leadership.

Evaluate your own demonstration.

1) Did the women learn how to do what you demonstrated?

2) What evidence was given that the women plan to carry out this practice in their homes?

3) How could this demonstration be improved?



## Remember....

### WASH DISHES RIGHT TO...

- Prevent Disease Germs
- Make Food Taste Better
- Make Dishes Look More Attractive

### BOOKS TO HELP YOU

- From Hand to Mouth--U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Public Health Service, Bulletin No. 281.
- Miss Williams Cookery Book--Longman's, Green and Company, London, New York.
- Tools for Food Preparation and Dishwashing--U.S. Department of Agriculture, Home & Garden Bulletin No. 3.